

Town of Pleasant Valley

2013

OPEN SPACE AND

FARMLAND PLAN



SUBMITTED TO
Town of Pleasant Valley
1554 Main Street
Pleasant Valley, New York 12569

SUBMITTED BY
Town of Pleasant Valley Open Space Committee
with assistance from:
AKRF, Inc. and
Taconic Site Design and Landscape Architecture

Town of Pleasant Valley

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**OPEN SPACE AND
FARMLAND PLAN**

Prepared for

The Town of Pleasant Valley Town Board

Prepared by



This project has been funded in part by a grant from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund through the Hudson River Estuary program of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.



Cover Letter

Dear Residents and Board Members:

It has been six years since the Open Space Committee committed to creating this plan, and in that time, we learned a lot about the community we call home.

Thank you to the insight of local famers and those associated with farming who have helped enormously in their contributions to this Plan, specifically: Harry Baldwin and David Tetor, members of the Dutchess County Farmland Protection Board; Dr. Sam Simon, Board member of Hudson Valley Fresh Dairy Cooperative; and Charlie Carroll. Through our conversations with these individuals and the many others who assisted us in preparing this Plan, we were able to understand that farmers just want to farm. They love what they do and just want to keep on doing it. However, economic conditions make their job increasingly difficult. This Plan proposes a range of options to assist farmers, from supporting local farming by buying local and visiting local farmstands, tax incentives, and various state and federal funding sources. Ultimately, creative solutions come from willingness and collaboration – as evidenced by the success of Hudson Valley Fresh.

Other professionals who contributed to the preparation of this Plan, educated and exposed our Committee to new ways of looking at the significance of Pleasant Valley and the resources within the Town included: Alan Berkowitz of the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Laura Heady, Hudson River Estuary Program, Biodiversity Outreach Coordinator, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation in cooperation with Cornell University and Gretchen Stephens, Director of the Biodiversity Resources Center- Hudsonia, Ltd.

The Pleasant Valley Conservation Advisory Council, Planning Board, Comprehensive Plan Committee and Town Board including our current liaison councilman Don Stagliano also assisted us in understanding local laws and protocol.

Local residents, including but not limited to; Jennifer Cherry, Melissa Lawlor, Margi Licchiello, and Jerry Ottaway all of whom shared stories and experiences that helped build our definitions, and recommendations. Through her experiences with the Dutchess Land Conservancy and the National Parks Service, Jennifer Cherry educated our Committee on the many options available to landowners with a desire to retain the rural character of their land and the need to be compensated for permanent conservation of their properties. Melissa Lawlor shared the viewpoint of a wife, mother, community service member, and gardener (to name just a few of her talents). Margi Licchiello, through her experience with property management, business ownership and entrepreneurship offered our Committee a fresh perspective and keyed us in to economic concerns, and the impact of climate change on land and resource preservation efforts. Jerry Ottaway educated and guided our Committee with his first-hand knowledge of the conservation easement process, by which he opened his land and farm to the residents of Pleasant Valley. Jerry is an active farmer, and a steward of the land. The Committee would also like to especially thank our Committee member, Teddi Southworth, whose wonderful photographs of the working landscape in Pleasant Valley can be seen

throughout this Plan. Teddi's photographs capture the natural and physical beauty that characterize our Town, and are invaluable in telling our story through pictures.

Other residents we met along the way showed us much of what we later validated in our on-line survey; that is, Pleasant Valley residents care about the rural character of our Town, agriculture is important, and residents are willing to do something about it.

Through all of this information sharing, research and collaboration, the Committee developed a draft Open Space and Farmland Plan for the Town we call home. Once this Plan was drafted, the Committee enlisted the support of AKRF, Inc. and Taconic Site Design and Landscape Architecture (TSD), who refined our Plan, providing their expertise and insight, and leading the public engagement process to gather input from Pleasant Valley stakeholders and residents. The Committee is very grateful to Nina Peek (AKRF, Inc.) and Peter Karis (TSD), both of whom went above and beyond in their work to deliver our Town a document that will help guide Pleasant Valley into the future and of which we are very proud.

The Open Space Committee would also like take this opportunity to explain just what we mean by a Plan. As stated within the document it is a vision for Pleasant Valley. A "Plan" as defined by Webster, is "a detailed proposal for doing or achieving something." Proposal is defined as "an act of putting forward or stating something for consideration." Consideration is defined as "continuous or careful thought".

Therefore, we propose and hope that the current and future Pleasant Valley residents and elected officials continuously consider through careful thought, the proposals stated herein when bringing the Town of Pleasant Valley into the future. We also hope that each and every one of you have clean drinking water, get to eat yogurt made from the milk from a cow who lives up the road, catch a fish in the Wappingers Creek, take a walk on a trail, eat a tomato that travelled less than 15 miles to get to your plate, play in a playground that looks like a train, see a Blanding's turtle, shop in a viable Town center, live amongst your neighbors, and take a breath of fresh air. All of that is possible through continuous careful thought of what is contained in this plan.

Thank you,

Town of Pleasant Valley Open Space Committee 2013

Sandra Larkin, Chair

Ross Hartlipp

Meta Plotnik

Rebecca Seaman

Teddi Southworth

Funding for the Town of Pleasant Valley Open Space and Farmland Plan was provided through a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Hudson River Estuary Grant.



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